



TRANSCRIPT REPORT

Date: December 8, 2005

Agenda item No: 5

Council Action Date: December 8, 2005

To: CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD
From: SANDRA MUÑOZ, EXECUTIVE OFFICER
Subject: APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Approve the minutes of the regular meeting of November 8, 2005.

George G. Sinopoli
Chairman



**CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD
MINUTES
MEETING #682**



**November 8, 2005
Chairman George G. Sinopoli**

**Leo Burke, Vice Chairman Vernon Chong, Board Member
James C. Crump, Jr., Board Member William D. Jackson, Board Member**

The California Veterans Board met at Monterey City Council, Monterey, California at 9:00 a.m.

ROLL CALL

Present: Board Members George G. Sinopoli Chairman, Leo P. Burke Vice-Chairman, Vernon Chong, Member, James C. Crump, Jr. Member, William D. Jackson Member

Absent: None

Chairman Sinopoli presided

INVOCATION

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

WELCOMING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION

Charlie Estridge, Invocation

Janet Parks, Pledge of Allegiance

Chairman Sinopoli introduced Simon Salinas, Assemblymember District 28. Assemblymember Salinas said there are a myriad of ways in which we need to help our veterans. Locally, he has been working on a project to build and construct a cemetery for veterans. He asked everyone to join him in trying to convince the state government to work with Monterey County in constructing this cemetery.

Alec Arago, Office of Congressman Sam Farr District Director explained that Congressman Farr has been pursuing the idea of creating a national cemetery; however a guideline that the Veteran's Administration has prohibits two cemeteries to be within 75 miles of each other. He distributed copies of a funding bill that Congressman Farr is supporting regarding land located at Fort Ord, California being set aside for a cemetery.

CALIFORNIA VETERANS BOARD CONSENT ITEMS

1. MINUTES

Executive Officer, Sandra Munoz

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the minutes of the meeting held September 29 and 30, 2005

Board member Jackson moved to approve September 29 and 30, 2005 minutes. Board member Burke seconded. The vote was as follows:

AYES: Board member Burke, Chong, Crump, Jackson, and Sinopoli

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

2. OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION OF CHAIRMAN GEORGE SINOPOLI

Chair Sinopoli thanked everyone for attending. Board members and the Executive Officer were introduced.

Self-introductions by the audience

3. OPENING REMARKS AND INTRODUCTION OF SECRETARY THOMAS JOHNSON

Secretary Johnson introduced Chief Legal Counsel Deputy Secretary Rob Wilson and Undersecretary Roger Brautigan.

4. DEPARTMENTAL UPDATES

Report by: Secretary Tom Johnson informed the Board that a written update will be provided on November 15, 2005 regarding the GLAVC. Secretary Johnson introduced Melissa Decker, Deputy Cabinet Secretary who reported that much support has been received from members of Congress for the State Homes Program. It is important to continue the educational effort with members of Congress. Everyone needs to lobby.

Discussion was held: Board member Crump, Chong, Jackson, and Chair Sinopoli.

Secretary Johnson referred the Board to Tab M providing information for the Veterans Homes update.

Secretary Johnson updated the Board on the Legal Division and said he is proud of the work that legal staff is doing. He introduced Mr. Robert Wilson, Chief Counsel for the Legal Division, who stated that his goal is to reduce the litigation as much as possible.

5. OTHER UPDATES

Mr. Wilson reported on the hiring of vets. In California, the hiring and promotion of civil service employees is based on merit as determined initially by a competitive examination. Law gives veterans preference points for the examination. In terms of getting veterans to hire in, they basically have to find the jobs, apply for them and be competitive. Veterans' preference points are not given for any position which requires four years of college education or more than two years of experience.

Discussion was held: Board Member Crump

Mr. Jack Kirwan updated the Board on DVBE (Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise) Program. There are three factors that make this program successful in an Agency: (1) top down support; (2) active participation on both sides of the equation; (3) active outreach and education.

Discussion was held: Board Member Crump

Mr. John Hanretty spoke about the Department of Veterans Affairs DVBE and about an individual who e-mailed the Board who felt that the Farm and Home Program should use more DVBE in their appraisal and broker panel.

He spoke about two operational barriers (1) geographic disparity; and (2) eighty percent of the Department's contracts are medical contracts due to the Veteran's Homes.

The complaint that was received via e-mail was from a broker in San Diego and questioned why DVBE weren't being used to sell repossessed homes. The Department will continue to look at using veterans

for the appraisals and any veteran wishing to purchase a home will be provided with a list of the appraisers.

6. DISCUSSION OF DRAFTING RESOLUTION SUPPORTING HR 2952

Board member Burke read the resolve as follows: “Now, therefore be it resolved by the California Veterans Board that the Board hereby urges the 109th Congress to support this legislative action to immediately remove this discriminatory restriction from the Internal Revenue Code in order that today’s veterans and their families might enjoy the same benefits as their earlier counterparts; and be it further resolved, that the Executive Officer of the California Veterans Board forward official copies of this resolution to the President of the United States, to the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives and the President of the United States Senate, to the Authors of S.R. 2952 and S. 1449, and to all the members of the California Congressional Delegation with the request that this resolution be officially entered into the Congressional Record as a memorial to the Congress of the United States of America.

RECOMMENDATION

Board member Burke moved for adoption of Resolution HR2952. Board member Crump seconded.

Discussion: None

Public Comment: None

AYES: Board member Burke, Chong, Crump, Jackson, and Sinopoli

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

7. DISCUSSION AND STATUS FORT ORD VETERANS CEMETERY

Secretary Johnson said the federal government has been very generous to California over the last two years with regard to federal cemeteries. Regarding the Fort Ord Cemetery, Congressman Farr has some creative ideas relative to how a partnership might be developed that would ultimately result in a cemetery at Fort Ord. Melissa Decker was introduced and she explained that Congressman Farr’s idea needs to be explored a bit more with this Board.

Comments from the audience:

Ralph Villar explained what this Board could do to help see Fort Ord Veterans Cemetery constructed.

Ms. Janet Parks said she needs the Board’s help because the federal government has the money to fund the state in order to build the Fort Ord Veterans Cemetery. She has sent a letter to the Chairman of the Advisory Commission for Cemeteries and Memorials requesting the suspension of the 75-mile limit.

Norm Channell spoke in support of the construction of the Ft. Ord Veterans Cemetery.

Mr. Wilson asked if the land for the proposed cemetery site has been environmentally cleared. Mr. Doug Kenyan said as far as he knows the environmental impact has been done but he does not have it in writing.

Discussion: Board member Crump

RECOMMENDATION

Board Member Burke read AB-922 Salinas Veterans Cemetery Central Coast and moved for its adoption. Board member Crump seconded.

Discussion: None

AYES: Board member Burke, Chong, Crump, Jackson, and Sinopoli

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

8. REVIEW OF PROPOSED CVB MEETING SCHEDULE 2006

Chair Sinopoli reviewed the proposed CVB 2006 schedule.

Discussion: Board member Burke, Jackson; Board member Chong said the Board voted on having meetings every other month and this draft schedule does not reflect the Boards decision. If the Board chooses not to have meetings every other month then the vote needs to be rescinded.

RECOMMENDATION

Board Member Jackson moved to rescind the vote to meet every other month. Board member Burke seconded.

Discussion: None

AYES: Board member Burke, Crump, Jackson, and Sinopoli

NOES: Chong

ABSENT: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

Discussion: Board member Jackson asked to hold the October meeting in Chula Vista. He also suggested that an advocate be appointed to attend the three meetings to be held at the homes.

9. REVIEW OF EXCESS INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR THE FIRE & HAZARD PROGRAM

RECOMMENDATION

Board member Crump moved to formally adopt Option Two, "California Department of Veterans Affairs Fire and Hazard Program, October 21, 2005 to October 31, 2006 program structure proposed first excess layer is for \$20-30 million, premium of \$190,000 deposit and minimum, and Westchester Surplus Lines Insurance Company A.M. Best Rating A+". Board member Jackson seconded.

AYES: Board member Burke, Chong, Crump, Jackson, and Sinopoli

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

Chairman declared the motion carried.

10. REVIEW OF FORMAL APPEAL CHANELL CLEMONS (05-06 LOCATION

Board member Chong said that the location for this appeal would most likely be in Ventura in March 2006.

11. ACTIVITY REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Board member Jackson said he has done a lot of public speaking.

Board member Chong: none to report

Board member Crump said he attended the Secretary's conference on October 7. He also attended the Veterans Affiliation Council of Sacramento, and on October 16 he attended the Tuskegee Airman Major Fundraiser at McClellan Business Park, and on October 29 he marched in support of the Veterans Benefits at the State Capitol, and on November 3 the McClellan Aviation Museum Foundation Campaign Kick-Off Reception.

Board member Burke said he attended the regular meeting of the Board November 8, the Area Three meeting on October 18, the federal court case on October 11, and the American Legion Department Commission meeting on October 28.

Chairman Sinopoli said an important PGA Golf tournament would be held where all proceeds will be donated to the Veteran's Home in Fresno California.

12. SELECT COMMITTEE REPORTS BY BOARD MEMBERS

Board member Burke updated the Board on the Legislative Select Committee Assembly measures as follows: Support AB30, AB276, AB306, AB690, AB1594, SB1052; No on SB181, SB1052, SB1082; Neutral on AB294, AB410, AB1021, ACR10, SB693, SCR17 and SB766; and further study required on AB922 and SB480

Discussion: Board member Crump

Board member Burke reported and provided background on the naming of the new national cemetery in Dixon, California. It was suggested this item be placed as an agenda item for the Board's December meeting.

Board member Crump reported on the Farm and Home Committee.

Board member Chong presented the Annual Report and the re-writing of some of the policies and procedures.

Board member Jackson updated the Board on Veterans Homes and said he would like repair of Barstow included in the budget.

Board member Jackson reported on a program called USVets that helps homeless vets.

Board member Crump informed the Board that Mr. Hanretty is working on a contract and will be submitted to the Board when completed.

Chair Sinopoli advised the Board members that 56 letters have been received from children at the Bell Intermediate School and he asked the Secretary to respond with a thank you note to the school.

13. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC – Three Minute Limit

Board Policy Prohibits Response from Board Members

David Salopek

14. ADJOURNED at 12:15 p.m.